



HIKING – FOREST SERVICE – ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



NATIONAL FOREST – San Juan RANGER DISTRICT - Columbine

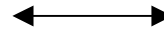
Updated: February, 2003

Continental Divide Trail #813 – Knife Edge to Weminuche Pass Length: 17.2 mi. (27.5 km.)

Use: Moderate to Heavy

Recommended Season

Spring Summer Fall Winter



Difficulty: Moderately Hard

USGS Map (s): Cimarron Peak, Granite Lake,
Little Squaw Creek, Weminuche Pass

Starting Elevation: 10,600'

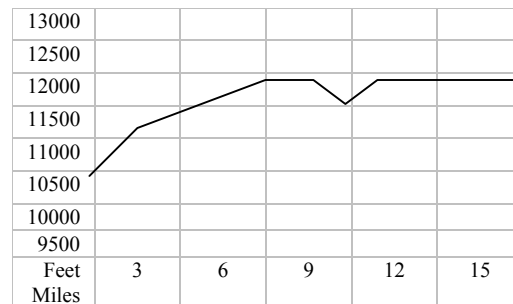
At Weminuche Pass, about 5 miles

From 30-Mile Campground

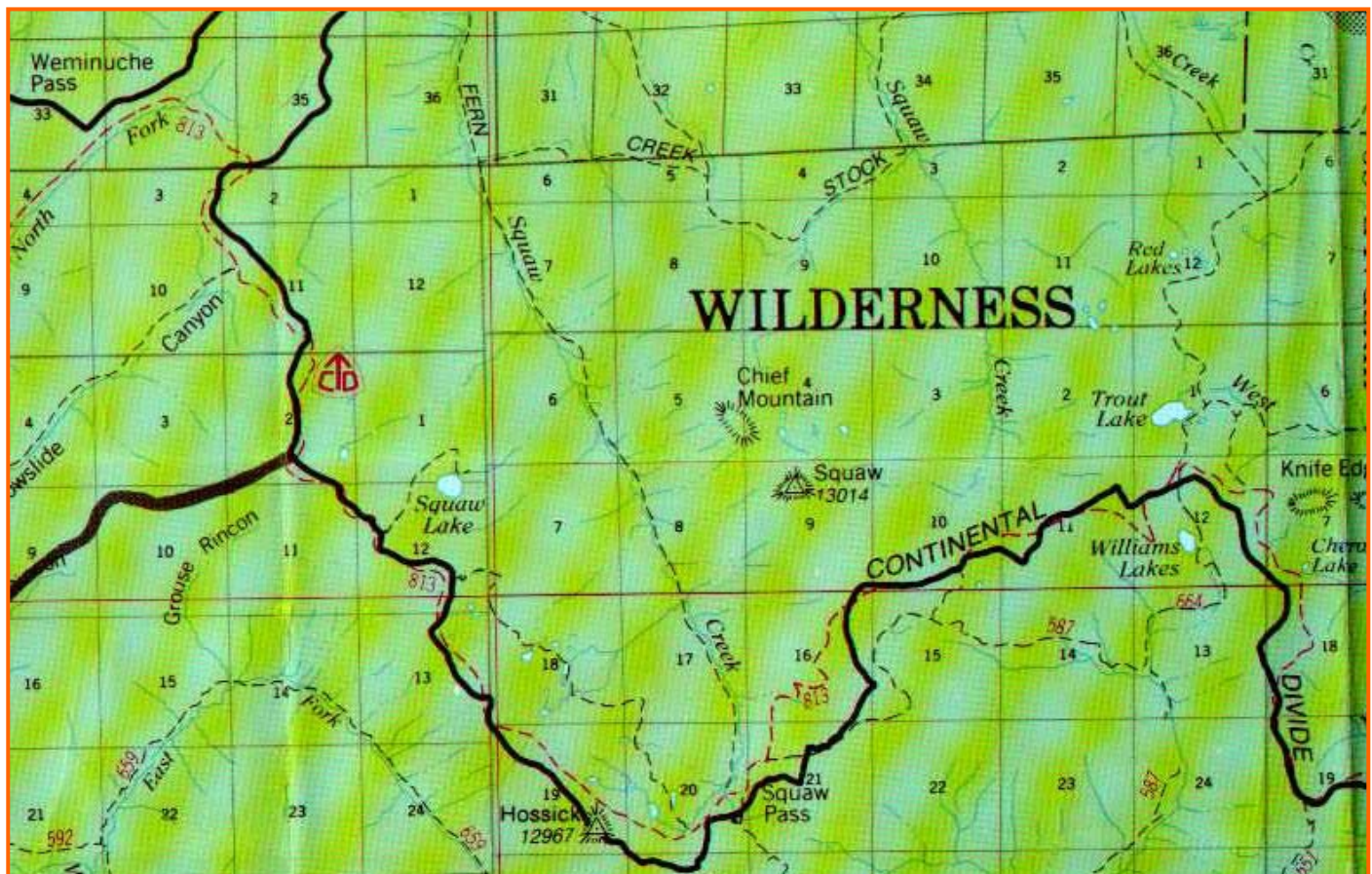
Ending Elevation: 11,800'

At Knife Edge about ½ mile above
Trout Lake

Recommended Season: Summer



Access #1: Travel southwest from Creede on Colorado Highway 149 about 20.1 miles to the junction of Highway 149 and Forest Development Road #520 (Upper Rio Grande River Road), then about 10 miles to 30-Mile Campground. Take the Weminuche Creek Trail #818 from the campground to Weminuche Pass. Once at the Pass, cross the diversion ditch and stay to the east side of the headwaters of the Pine River, and you should have little trouble picking up the Continental Divide Trail #813.



Attractions & Considerations : There are many beautiful, panoramic views along this segment of the Continental Divide Trail. Plenty of film will be needed by the camera buff. Fishermen will find some short side trips can be made to Trout, Williams, and Squaw Lakes. Squaw Lake will provide a good camping area and good fishing, but allow for a steep climb back to the Continental Divide Trail. Side trips to either Trout or Williams Lakes do not involve hard climbs back to the Divide Trail.

Scan of the San Juan National Forest Map
Forest Service Maps and other publications available at the Public Lands Center in the Durango Tech Center, ½ mile west of Durango off of Highway 160 or by calling 970-247-4874. www.sjma.org

Much of this trail segment is above timberline. Good camping areas, with tree cover, can be found at Weminuche Pass, the head of the North Fork of the Pine, and at Squaw Pass. Domestic sheep grazing occurs in the area from Squaw Pass to the head of Snowslide Canyon. Bighorn sheep can occasionally be observed in the area near Hossick Peak. Elk may also be observed grazing at times in many of the meadow areas. The best areas for seeing elk are usually near Chief Mountain and at the headwaters of Little Squaw Creek.

Elevations are high and the air is thin, so plan to be in good physical condition. It is usually best to do your hiking in the early morning to early afternoon. Afternoon thundershowers can be severe, with a few areas along the trail providing protection from lightning.

Narrative: Shortly after leaving the tree cover at Weminuche Pass, the trail will cross a water diversion ditch and proceed through a boggy meadow for about one mile. The trail will then turn easterly and proceed up the North Fork of the Pine River. It will climb gradually through the spruce-covered slopes of this drainage before getting above the timberline and crossing the boggy meadows and willow fields at the head of Snowslide Canyon. The trail will continue along a broad, open, grassy ridge along the Continental Divide for several miles. It will then begin making a gradual descent through open meadows and parks below the rugged, rocky cliff-like country near Hossick Peak. After Squaw Pass, the trail will make a rather strong climb through scattered spruce timber patches, before entering the open, grassy ridges near Chief Mountain. The trail will continue along the backbone of the Divide, weaving back and forth from one side to the other until it reaches the open pass between Williams Lake and Trout Lake. The Knife Edge lies directly ahead, with the trail carved into the side of a cliff, jutting sharply out from the Continental Divide.

The trail is well defined for the vast majority of this segment. **Some portions of this trail segment are poorly located on the Forest Service 1/2"/mile map, so it is best to have the more accurate U.S.G.S. topographic maps for reference and orientation.**



Fishing Considerations: Williams Lake and Trout Lake are rated fair for cutthroat trout.



Weminuche Wilderness Regulations: Group size is limited to 15 people. A combination of people and livestock must not exceed 25. All livestock feed must be certified weed free. Camping is not allowed within 100 feet of any water source unless the campsite is designated or posted. Do not leave campfires unattended. Outfitter-guides who receive any form of compensation must obtain a special-use permit to operate on public land. Dogs must be leashed or under voice control at all times and must not disturb people or wildlife. Shortcutting switchbacks on trails is prohibited. Disposal of human waste and gray water within 100 feet of any water source is prohibited. Trash must be packed out and properly disposed of. Cutting or damaging live trees is prohibited. **Please check trailhead signs or Forest Service Offices for site-specific camping, campfire, and livestock regulations.**